

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /150 W

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P R 101055Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0993

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI U

AMEMBASSY LONDON ENGLAND

AMCONSUL DHAHREN SAUDI ARABIA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0783

E.O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : PINT

SUBJECT : BAHRAIN'S NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

REF : MANAMA 779

1. WITH FINAL COUNT IN, IT APPARENT THAT GOVT UNDERESTIMATED RESULTS OF ELECTION IN WHICH POLITICAL PARTIES NOT REPRESENTED. A MUCH LARGER PERCENTAGE OF LIBERAL CANDIDATES IN THEIR THIRTIES WAS ELECTED THAT WAS EXPECTED. IT MAY WELL BE BETTER, HOWEVER, TO HAVE THEM IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY THAN CAUSING TROUBLE BEHIND SCENES. THESE MEN ALONG WITH OTHERS ELECTED HAVE POPULAR MANDATE, AND IT NOW UP TO THEM TO PRODUCE SOME OF WHAT THEY PROMISED DURING CAMPAIGN, REALIZING THAT IRRESPONSIBILITY ON THEIR PART COULD SET BACK PROGRESS TOWARD REAL DEMOCRACY.

2. WHILE SOME IN GOVT ARE WORRIED, GENERAL CONSENSUS IS "WAIT AND SEE". IN ASSEMBLY GOVT CAN COUNT ON VALUABLE MANEUVERING ROOM, USING LIBERALS TO HELP PUSH THROUGH PROGRESSIVE

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LEGISLATION WHILE USING HELP OF CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT

TO BLOCK ANYTHING RADICAL. WHILE MACHINERY FOR DISSOLVING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IS SPELLED OUT IN CONSTITUTION, GOVT IS NOT EXPECTED TO TAKE SUCH MEASURE AS LONG AS ASSEMBLY ACTS IN RESPONSIBLE WAY.

3. THERE SEEKS GOOD POSSIBILITY HASSAN AL-JISHI, A NATIONALIST WHO IS NEAR POLITICAL CENTER OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP, WILL BE SELECTED ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT.

4. THE RESULTS OF THIS OBVIOUSLY FREE ELECTION SHOW THAT BAHRAIN HAS MADE PRAISE-WORTHY FIRST STEP IN ITS EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY. IT NOW UP TO ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO MOVE PROCESS ALONG BY EXERCISING RESPONSIBILITY. WHILE FIRST FEW MONTHS MAY WELL BE ROCKY, WE EXPECT THE FLEDGLING ASSEMBLY TO ACCOMPLISH PROGRESS IN AREAS WHERE GOVT HAS BEEN UNABLE MOVE FAST ENOUGH FOR MANY PEOPLE.

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